

MINUTES  
POCD STEERING COMMITTEE  
MARCH 20, 2014 – 6:00 P.M.  
MEETING #12  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

GROTON PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND  
MUNICIPAL COASTAL PROGRAM UPDATES

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Cerf, Rafferty, Pritchard, Sherrard, Scott, Smith,  
Sutherland Mathanool (6:29 pm)  
Absent: Marquardt, Williams  
Staff present: Jones, Murphy, Gilot

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of January 16, 2014

MOTION: To approve the minutes of January 16, 2014, as amended.

Motion made by Rafferty, seconded by Sutherland, so passed unanimously.

Cerf asked for a breakdown of open space; Zuba said they had been unable to definitively categorize each piece of land. Cerf said she would like to see one, and offered to assist.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Cerf said that she attended a CCM meeting in Glastonbury; they have a fantastic set of green initiatives of every area in Town government; others may want to take a look at their website.

IV. ITEM OF BUSINESS

1. Report of Steering Committee Representatives – None
2. Economic Development and Energy & Sustainability Memos

Phil Michalowski, Milone and MacBroom, briefly discussed two documents which were distributed to the Committee. Staff noted that the Economic Development section is being finalized to put on the Town website; working on Energy and Sustainability but it needs to be decided where this will be placed in the final document. He explained that while there are principal themes in the POCD, provisions of the Energy and Sustainability memo would be integrated into themes throughout the final document. Phil asked for any comments on the memo.

Discussion ensued on climate change history, such as a sea level rise in New London of seven inches over last 60 years, and whether a plan for the next 60 years should be included. Staff said the MCP will address that. Dave Murphy, Milone and MacBroom, briefly discussed the MCP.

Recommendations to require LEED certification and energy star ratings were discussed. It was suggested that those may be a burden to impose those in terms of economic development. Michalowski said addressing efficiency with LEED certification would also impact the desirability of property. It should be an item for consideration/exploration by the Town rather than a mandate. Green credits/tax credits are offered for certain green building standards at the state level but he was unaware of any municipality offering such.

It was asked if the history of water quality in Thames or the Sound over time would be reviewed and whether an action plan would be developed. David Murphy of Milone and MacBroom said some of that is in MCP, and briefly discussed the use of an impaired waters list provided by EPA/DEEP and the Shellfish Commission. Recommendations regarding charging stations for electric vehicles should be included. Staff said incentives through new development and zoning would address those items. This Plan will not get into that much detail. Zoning standards would adopt, incentivize and develop detail for implementation.

The hierarchy of the municipal plans was explained. The POCD is a statutory requirement, the highest tier. The Committee will choose the areas of focus.

Farm markets / small farm operations vs. land for development was discussed.

The Committee discussed the actual total number of jobs in Groton. Several of the tables provided by Milone and MacBroom show different numbers for total jobs. Zuba stated the numbers were from different sources and may or may not include military and civilian/non-civilian jobs. Zuba said he would provide clarification of the numbers. Economic development priorities and the 2006 SEDP recommendations were reviewed.

It was suggested that Bluff Point and Haley Farm be included with state parks under Tourism.

### 3. Municipal Coastal Program Draft Recommendations

David Murphy presented a draft of the strategies for the MCP and reviewed each section. He explained water dependent uses, water quality and coastal TMDL.

Murphy reviewed some of the strategies suggested.

Buffers and Setbacks – coastal resource setback may need to be increased in certain areas.

Increase freeboard – building house above base flood elevation. Historic district may be affected; could create architectural problems.

The Planning or Zoning Commission may be involved in decisions regarding area plans or incentives to not build in certain areas. There would

need to be cooperation and collaboration with subdivisions (i.e. Noank) to adopt the same boundary for setbacks and buffers if an overlay was created.

Townwide Harbor Management Plan – staff discussed the history of sector harbor plans. It was recommended that the town develop one town-wide plan.

Staff said the City and Groton Long Point have their own plans.

The following suggestions were offered by the Committee:

- Section 4 – V zone standards; can be brought further inland. Staff said may be in certain areas rather than everywhere.
  - Public access; secure ends of dead end roads – change to “public” dead end roads.
  - Public access to shoreline in Groton Long Point – it is accessible; parking is the issue. Discussion of Old Saybrook vs. GLP – access to water. Cerf said this recommendation should be removed.
  - Tidal wetlands - allow for marsh advancement-include Mystic River. Modify zoning and proposed land use along Thomas Road.
  - Take into consideration moving sand; reclamation of sand in various areas.
4. Action Agenda – Open Space, Natural, Coastal and Historic Resources, Community Character

The Committee reviewed the packet distributed by Zuba, which included four themes with goals, objectives, and short and long term recommendations.

The following suggestions were offered by the Committee:

Preserving Open Space:

- An open space acquisition fund already exists.
- Cerf requested an inventory, or map, with a breakdown of open space. Zuba said it would be very difficult to produce such a map as each parcel’s deed would have to be researched and reviewed. The Committee discussed different interpretations of “protected open space”, and whether this map would be important for the POCD.
- The implementation of a new Open Space zone should be moved up to short term rather than long term. An Open Space zone would be more protective; define uses, include a residential overlay. The zone must be tied to logical open space, shape, resources, ownership, etc. Cerf requested a map and spreadsheet which would include existing open space for protection of wildlife - Bluff Point, Haley Farm,

Avalonia, all the GOSA properties. The state goal of 21% open space, as well as the state's definition of open space, were discussed.

5. Process to Forward Draft POCD to Planning Commission

This was Michael Murphy's last official meeting for the Town. The Chairman asked how the Committee will be staffed going forward. Murphy stated that Deb Jones and Diane Glemboski will continue to work on the POCD. Rick Norris can assist to provide additional input but the streetscape project is beginning very soon.

The Plan needs to move from the Steering Committee to the Planning Commission. The draft will be presented at a May 15<sup>th</sup> public/community meeting. Any public input from that meeting will be adjusted into the draft, and the Steering Committee will turn the draft over to the Planning Commission. Statutorily the Plan needs to go to the Town Council 65 days prior to a public hearing. Town Council comments should be worked in to draft or entered into the record. Tentatively, the final Plan should be completed by December.

The Chairman asked for documents to be available at least a week before the meeting to allow them time to review. Future land use plan – on a map. Chairman asked for it to be out before Easter.

The MCP will run parallel to the POCD but is an independent document; must be referred to DEEP. Hearings will be held concurrently to some degree.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. made by Sutherland, seconded by Methanol, so voted unanimously.

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Jeff Pritchard, Secretary  
Steering Committee

Prepared by Debra Gilot  
Office Assistant III